

with Rome; shortly after which (loth
October,
1144), Prince Alfonso died, a youth who
seems to
have been of the dashing soldier type of
his brother
Roger.

The tide of conquest was finally
stayed. The
Regno had been carried to the Tronto;
its frontier
now ran from the Tronto mouth to Rieti
and Lake
Fucino, from that down the Garigliano
to Ceprano,
and again to the sea at Gaeta, the
frontiers which,
little changed, marked the kingdom for
seven hun-
dred years. Roger had given to the
Regno geo-
graphical limits which, save to the
north-west,
might be called those set by nature: the
sea on three
sides, to the north the great mountain
ramparts of
the Abruzzi, and the lesser ranges that
run back
from the Garigliano into the backbone
of Italy. A
contemporary notices how nature
favoured the
unity of the Regno: the rivers of the
frontiers
could be crossed only by bridges, the
mountains by
passes; the bridges and passes were
guarded by
royal castles, as the coasts were
studded with
watch-towers watching the seas for
hostile fleets.*

The new kingdom had earned by the
ten years'
war its place among the nations. On
no single
point had its audacious ruler lowered
his flag.

Victor over so impressive a coalition,
he remained
the common foe of its constituents;
above all, the
majesty of the Holy Roman Empire
could not
forgive him. The new ruler in Germany,
Conrad
III., had all the pride of his ancient
office against

¹ *Chron. Ferrar., op, tit., pp. 26,27.*